

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 7, 2025

Ballet Kelowna Launches 2025/26 Season with Electrifying Triple Bill in **– Countermove –**

From dancing doppelgangers to cowboy hats and a life-sized chuckwagon, Ballet Kelowna's season opener presents an astounding evening of contemporary ballet

Kelowna, BC – Ballet Kelowna presents three distinct works highlighting the company's diverse range of repertoire in its adventurous season opener, ***Countermove***, on stage **November 7 + 8, 2025**, at the **Kelowna Community Theatre**. The boundary-pushing program will feature the world premiere of ***still before*** by the Co-Artistic Directors of Vancouver's Belle Spirale Dance Projects, **Alexis Fletcher** and **Sylvain Senez**. The duo make their Ballet Kelowna debut with a commissioned work that explores the fleeting nature of time. Ballet Kelowna Artistic Director and CEO **Simone Orlando** remounts her highly stylized and mesmerizing commentary on conformity and individuality in ***Doppeling***, and Associate Artist **Cameron sinkwə Fraser-Monroe** will return with ***The Cowboy Act Suite***, a refreshed version of his 2023 satire of the classic "Cowboys and Indians" trope.

"We are delighted to welcome new and returning audiences to experience our 2025/26 season of contemporary ballet with this exhilarating program, featuring a trio of works by Canadian choreographers that showcase Ballet Kelowna's artistic versatility," says Simone Orlando, Ballet Kelowna's Artistic Director and CEO. "This mixed program represents a full circle moment for me, as I had the pleasure of dancing with both Alexis Fletcher and Sylvain Senez while I was a member of Ballet BC. In fact, Alexis was also one of the original dancers in *Doppeling* when it premiered with Ballet BC in 2009. It's a joy to work together again, and to introduce their artistry to Kelowna audiences this fall, in addition to celebrating the visionary work of Ballet Kelowna's Associate Artist, Cameron sinkwə Fraser-Monroe."

Countermove opens with *Doppeling*, Orlando's subversive study on our societal pressure to conform. Originally created for Ballet BC in 2009, the work was last performed by Ballet Kelowna in 2019. Set to Bach's lively *Double Violin Concerto* and featuring the ensemble clad in matching gold unitards and bobbed wigs, the playful work is "a gender-bending vision of doppelganger ballerinas breaking loose" (*The Georgia Straight*).

Next on the program is a multidisciplinary world premiere, *still before* by Fletcher and Senez, which explores the universal struggle against time's incessant nature. Their visceral and emotionally resonant choreography, described as "poetic grace" (*reviewVancouver*), embodies our instinctual pull towards

past and future, despite our efforts to grasp hold of the present moment. Set design by Senez amplifies the work's urgency, with sand-filled hourglasses capturing a tangible representation of time slipping away. Fletcher and Senez's choreography is set to an original composition by the duo's longtime collaborator, Ben Waters.

Fletcher and Senez both danced for more than a decade with Ballet BC, where Senez also served as Rehearsal Director until 2016. The pair have produced an annual outdoor dance series, The Dance Deck, since 2015 and founded their own company, Belle Spirale Dance Projects, in 2023.

Also returning to the Kelowna stage is a revitalized version of Fraser-Monroe's *The Cowboy Act Suite*, a satirical romp through the Wild West that challenges the narrative archetypes of the classic western genre. Set to music by Mohawk singer/songwriter Tom Wilson and Cree Métis singer/songwriter iskwē and with a life-sized chuckwagon on stage, the spirited performance follows Molly Tagaq, an Indigenous photographer, on her journey to capture an image of what she believes to be the "real" cowboy. Full of humour and misadventure, this work examines what happens when an 'Indian' directs the 'Cowboys' through their history. Originally created in 2023 as an evening-length work, *The Cowboy Act Suite* has been reimagined for a mixed program, with refreshed scenes and new surprises for Kelowna audiences.

A member of the Tla'amin First Nation, Fraser-Monroe was Ballet Kelowna's first Artist in Residence (2022/23) and a Choreographer in Residence with Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet (2023/24), where he created *T'əl: The Wild Man of the Woods*. Fraser-Monroe has created four works for Ballet Kelowna, including *taqəš*, *ʔemawiygə*, and *payəčot yəxət*, in addition to *The Cowboy Act Suite*.

Ballet Kelowna's 2025/26 company dancers include McKeely Borger, Avery Grierson, Riku Hirakoba, Naomi Kawamura, Donaldo Nava, Samuel Ramos, Kurt Werner, and MacKye White, as well as apprentices Shae Jones, Lacey Park, and Emily Webb, and trainee Thealla Dach.

Tickets and information at balletkelowna.ca

Ballet Kelowna's 2025/2026 season is presented by the Thomas Alan Budd Foundation.

About Ballet Kelowna (balletkelowna.ca)

Founded in 2002, Ballet Kelowna is the sole professional dance company in B.C.'s Interior. The organization is committed to its role as a leader in the region through encouraging, promoting, and developing Canadian dancers and choreographers. The company performs annually for more than 12,000 audience members in Kelowna and on tour, and provides unique dance training opportunities and outreach programs. Its Artistic Director and CEO, Simone Orlando, is an award-winning choreographer and former dancer with Ballet BC and The National Ballet of Canada. Under Orlando's direction, Ballet Kelowna was named the 2024 Artistic Company of the Year by the BC Live Performance Network (formerly the British Columbia Touring Council) and was an organizational recipient of the Lieutenant Governor's Arts and Music Award in 2022.

LISTING INFORMATION

Ballet Kelowna presents *Countermove*

Dates & Times:	November 7 at 7:30pm + November 8 at 1:30pm & 7:30pm
Tickets:	Kelowna Community Theatre Phone: 250-469-8940 Online: theatre.kelowna.ca In Person: 1375 Water Street, Kelowna, BC
Ticket Prices:	From \$62.73 (Adult), \$54.40 (Senior), \$32.78 (Student/Child)
Performance Venue:	Kelowna Community Theatre 1375 Water Street, Kelowna, BC
Website:	balletkelowna.ca

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